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goods consumed in different classes and countries, as shown by recent statistics.

The last brief division, on the relation of production and consumption, is a discussion of the question of overproduction and crises. The conclusion is that though various measures suggested cannot be expected to do more than gradually to mitigate the evils, the radical remedy of socialism involves unbearable consequences, and "there is no good reason to break with the existing order of society."

This conclusion is typical of the tone pervading the entire volume. Containing no new contribution to economic science or to social philosophy, and without any special novelty in the manner of presentation, the book nevertheless has value as representing the prevalent views on these subjects in German academic circles. The position taken on all questions is that of those professorial economists in Germany who reject the socialism of Marx, but concede a large and even increasing field to state activity. One approaching the book with this idea of its character will find its discussions judicial in tone and harmonious in the treatment of details. It may therefore be for many readers both interesting and helpful.

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FRANK FETTER.

The Problem of the Aged Poor. By GEOFFREY DRAGE. London, Adam and Charles Black ; New York, Macmillan & Co., 1895. —xvii, 375 pp.

This volume is a blue book put into decent form and dress for the library. Early in January, 1893, an English royal commission was appointed to consider whether any alterations in the system of poor laws is desirable in the case of persons whose destitution is occasioned by incapacity for work resulting from old age. A report was made by this commission two years later, February 26, 1895, after an examination of about seventy witnesses, including poor-law officials, representatives of friendly societies, workingmen, and experts who had given special attention to the subject of relief, such as Rev. Canon Blackley, Miss Octavia Hill and Professor Marshall. This evidence, with the report, appeared in the usual bulky form of the English blue book, although the report itself is fairly well digested in a little over a hundred pages. Like most of the blue books dealing with social questions, the report does not put forth any novel or striking conclusions. It received the signatures of all the members, though nearly every one of them deemed it necessary to offer an explanatory

memorandum of his own particular point of view. An examination was made of the various schemes of pensions for the aged, but the commission was unable to recommend any of them, "in view of the financial and economic difficulties involved." The commissioners were, however, careful to state that they did not wish the report to be interpreted as a final statement of opinion, or to preclude the consideration of plans of a somewhat similar character if free from certain objections.

Mr. Drage has now taken the material thus collected by the commission, together with that gathered independently by Mr. Charles Booth and published in his work, *The Aged Poor in England and Wales*, and has endeavored to arrange it as far as possible according to a systematic scheme. He has also made an independent summary of the conclusions which might be drawn from the testimony before the commission. To this is added an account of the poor-law and old-age-pension systems of Germany and Denmark. The scheme of arrangement is an orderly one. It embraces the consideration of the extent of pauperism of the aged; its causes, moral and economic; the present means of meeting it by the poor law, by charity and by thrift; Booth's inquiry; and various pension schemes. Mr. Drage's particular conclusions differ in only a few points from those of the commission. When he does not agree with the inductions made by the commissioners, it is difficult, without constant reference to the report, to discover where the real points of difference are. The form of the *précis* has been maintained so rigidly that it is almost impossible to discover the boundary lines between the views of Mr. Drage and those of the commission. In regard to state pensions, he appears to agree with the commissioners in their objections. He does not, however, appear to have carried his investigations later than 1892; while, as the experiment in such pensions is so recent, it is hardly desirable to express an opinion without an inclusion of the very latest data.

This volume offers a wealth of suggestion to all interested in practical administration of charity, whether official or private. It also shows that a blue book can be worked over into a convenient form. *A propos* of this latter point, Mr. Drage might well have gone further with topical headings. Nor should he so studiously avoid paragraph headings, or so frequently allow paragraphs to run on their even tenor for four or five pages without a break. It is to be hoped, however, that he will continue his good offices, and give us further popular editions of now buried official documents.

DAVIS R. DEWEY.